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Pakistan

Poultry and Products

Avian Influenza Outbreak in Karachi 2008

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Report Highlights:

On February 1 and 4, Pakistan's National Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza confirmed the presence of the H5N1 virus on two adjacent commercial poultry farms in Karachi.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Annual Report
Islamabad [PK1]
[PK]

Pakistan Confirms H5N1 in Karachi

On February 1 and 4, Pakistan's National Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza (NRLAI) confirmed the presence of the H5N1 virus on two adjacent commercial poultry farms in the Gadap area of Karachi. The confirmed cases occurred in four-week old broiler flocks. The collective flock size on the two farms was approximately 10,000 birds – 4,000 died before confirmation and rest were culled. The Government of Pakistan (GOP) has taken standard quarantine measures and the affected area has been sealed.

Mortality reports have also come in from additional commercial poultry farms in Karachi as well as farms in Thatta and Badin Districts in Sindh Province. Samples have been sent to NRLAI for analysis.

The Karachi outbreaks are the fifth and sixth confirmed H5N1 cases in Pakistan during the 2007-2008 migratory bird season, with a total of 91,000 birds dead or culled so far. The February cases are the first confirmed outbreaks of H5N1 in South Pakistan this season. Prior to this, the last confirmed cases in Karachi were during the first week of April 2007 on three poultry farms where 6,000 birds succumbed to the virus and 28,000 were culled. All earlier reported cases this season were in North Pakistan.

Lack of Bio-Security Practices: A Potential Threat

Pakistan's poultry sector is highly unregulated with a majority of farms built in clusters around cities. The required minimum distance between poultry farms is not observed. In many cases, there are no boundary walls around these farms, thus increasing contamination risk. Experts believe that an unregulated poultry sector and lack of bio-security practices are the major reason behind these outbreaks.

Government to Register Poultry Farms

In the wake of these fresh cases, the GOP is planning to regulate the poultry business by registering all poultry farms in the country. The contours of this policy have not yet been finalized and promulgation of an ordinance is being contemplated as at present no legal framework is available for enforcing biosafety protocols.

OTHER RELEVANT REPORTS

REPORT #	SUBJECT	DATE SUBMITTED
PK7033	Pakistan Confirms Six Human AI Cases	12/18/07
PK7032	December Avian Influenza Alert	12/18/07
PK7027	Avian Influenza Alert	11/06/07

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